

# INFORMATION

## Steps in Buying War Surplus Medical Equipment

Medical men who are veterans of World War II are in a favorable position to purchase professional equipment and supplies through the War Assets Administration.

The two regional WAA offices in California estimate they have already materially aided hundreds of California medical men in reestablishing themselves professionally through purchases of surplus war items.

The variety of medical and surgical equipment which WAA has sold, is selling or will sell, is as extensive or as restricted as the surplus supplies from the sources from which it originates, the military forces. Some items—and many medical items among them—are in relatively short supply.

Many items in short supply, for which the veteran demand is large, have been put upon a "set aside" list. Until further notice, these items can be sold only to veterans of World War II. The usual rule is "one unit to a customer."

The fact that merchandise is included on the "set aside" list is no warranty that it is available for veteran buyers. War Assets can sell only property which has been declared surplus and many "set aside" items are in such short supply to WAA that only a fraction of the would-be buyers will ever get them.

The "set aside" list includes such medical and surgical equipment as cystoscopes, slit lamps, eye, ear, nose and throat diagnostic cases, x-ray equipment and accessories, physiotherapy equipment, including baths and baking equipment; laboratory equipment such as microscopes and accessories; stereoscopes; miscellaneous hospital equipment such as tables, lamps, stools, sterilizers.

Other items, although not peculiar to the medical profession, are also on the set-aside list. They include a great variety of various types of items, including typewriters, desks, chairs, cabinets and tables.

Medical items are generally sold at about one-half the original cost to the government.

To become eligible to purchase goods from WAA under a veteran's high priority, a professional man, like other veterans of World War II, must be certified at one of the WAA veterans' offices. There are ten of these in the San Francisco region alone. There are scores in other regions throughout the country.

Northern California certification offices are located at: 1540 Market Street, San Francisco; Civic Auditorium, Oakland; Chamber of Commerce Building, Sacramento; Chamber of Commerce Building, Stockton; 2138 Merced Street, Fresno; 1407 California Street, Redding; Army Headquarters, East Alisal Street, Salinas; 2510 M Street, Bakersfield, and Fourth and Ryder Streets, Vallejo.

In Southern California there are certification offices at 450 Fargo Street, Indio; 241 W. Broadway, Long Beach; 3636 W. Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles; 100 E. Carrillo, Santa Barbara; 388 4th Street, San Bernardino and 4205 Pacific Highway, San Diego.

Before being certified, a veteran must present a copy (a photostatic copy will do) of his discharge papers or terminal leave orders to WAA veterans' certification office. If buying strictly medical supplies and equipment, the veteran must also present evidence of his profession. Usually this evidence is sufficiently noted on his service papers.

He is then assigned a case number which shows his relative precedence in date of application. This number is important in the case of such critically short items as certain medical and surgical equipment allocation is made to veterans whose case numbers are the lowest; in other words, to those who applied first.

After certification, the veteran's name is placed on a list to receive notice of sale of the type of items for which he is applying. When the material becomes available, he is sent a catalog.

Upon receiving such a catalog he may make his proposed selections. Most such transactions are carried on by mail. Delivery is often made within 48 hours after a sale closes.

Credit and installment contracts are available to those who qualify.

If the material requested is not located in this region, a special division makes a nation-wide search. It is a rule of the Veterans' Division of WAA, whose personnel is made up largely of veterans of World War II, to turn nobody away without an answer. In order to find the answer, WAA has the advice of a number of specialists long experienced in medical and surgical sales.

It is to commercial channels that the medical man who is not a veteran of World War II must look in buying surplus property sold by WAA. Items sold to commercial channels are generally in relatively long supply or of such a nature that it is advisable to sell them quickly, hence in large quantities. Some items in particularly long supply are available for export.

Veterans of World War II have a high priority also to purchase the so-called "long supply" items. However, instead of rating a top priority as in the case of set-aside items, they rate second priority. The federal government has the first and highest priority to purchase "long supply" items.

WAA officials themselves caution medical men against undue hopes of obtaining any and all equipment they need from the WAA. The set-aside list, it was explained, is itself as far as a listing considered more or less permanent—but because items are listed on the set-aside list does not mean they have been physically set aside themselves. Such items are not available at all times.

For example, microscopes have been listed in the set-aside list for some time, but only a minor trickle has been declared surplus and available for sale.

Medical items which are sold, having generally originated from either the Army or the Navy, are as a rule standard medical equipment. However, for personal satisfaction, WAA recommends inspection of any potential purchase for items are generally sold on a "where is, as is" basis.

Efforts are also made by WAA to effect an equal distribution of medical items on the basis of population in regions in the United States. Thus each area is, as far as is humanly possible, guaranteed a fair share of scarce items, although the items themselves may be stored in a distant part of the country.

If you are an eligible veteran, WAA urges the earliest possible certification, for Robert M. Littlejohn national Administrator, has set next July 1 as the "target date" for the sale of the major portion of all surplus.